

Kennecott Land's Plan for the Salt Lake Valley West Bench

Overview

Kennecott Land was established in 2001 to focus on protecting and developing Kennecott Utah Copper's non-mining land and water assets. Kennecott Land owns 93,000 acres of land in the Oquirrh Mountains and foothills, the largest remaining land holding in the Salt Lake Valley. With significant population growth expected in the Salt Lake Valley over the next 100 years, much of the housing, jobs, transit, roads and open space will be built or protected on Kennecott land.

Background

Daybreak is a new Master Planned Community on the Salt Lake Valley's west bench that is being developed by Kennecott Land, a subsidiary of the international mining company Rio Tinto. Kennecott Land was established in 2001 and owns 93,000 acres of land in the Oquirrh Mountains and foothills. This is the largest remaining land holding in the Salt Lake Valley - equal to the size of the city of San Francisco. Across the country, there is no other private landowner that holds this much land adjacent to a metropolitan area. With significant population growth expected in the Salt Lake Valley over the next 100 years, much of the housing, jobs, transit, roads and open space will be built or protected on this land.

Daybreak is the first of Kennecott Land's planned communities. Situated on 4,126 acres in the city of South Jordan, the Daybreak community opened in 2004. Over the next 10 to 20 years, nearly 14,000 homes will be built at Daybreak, more than nine million square feet of commercial and industrial space will be developed, and major transportation corridors - including light rail and the Mountain View Corridor - will be built into the community.

The neighborhoods at Daybreak are linked together by open space, and will be connected by light rail to minimize traffic and provide easy access to Salt Lake City. Grocery stores and other amenities are all within walking distance, and a large town center will provide commercial and job opportunities. Most of the homes at Daybreak are planned within a quarter mile of schools, office space, shopping and parks to allow for convenient walking and biking.

Kennecott Land is collaborating with local governments to improve the quality of life in the Salt Lake community. These efforts are taking the form of public-private partnerships aimed at enhancing education in the south-west part of the Salt Lake valley, and accelerating progress on west side transportation projects.

Education

Over the last several years, this collaboration has resulted in Utah's first joint-use public elementary school. The new school is unique on two levels. First, a community center will be attached to it, making the joint-use facility a highly functional community focal point. This design concept will provide for a meeting place and will also allow members of the community to have access to continuing education, fitness, and indoor and outdoor recreation. Another feature of the school is its floor plan. It features a clustered classroom layout and rooms with moveable walls, creating an environment which accommodates collaborative and technology-based learning.

Located at Daybreak, the new school is slated for completion in 2005 and is one of only a handful of joint-use facilities in the United States. Kennecott Land helped fund the joint-use design and will contribute funding toward the construction of the community center.

Transportation

In June 2004 Kennecott Land joined forces with Midvale, Murray, South Jordan, West Jordan and the Utah Transit Authority to accelerate construction of the ten-mile Mid-Jordan light rail line. Together they raised the \$3.2 million needed to complete an environmental impact statement and begin the preliminary engineering of this new light rail extension. As a result, light-rail cars will be pulling into stations on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley, including Daybreak, as early as 2009-2010.

Other transportation projects include working with west-side communities and the Utah Department of Transportation to plan a new major highway, the Mountain View Corridor, on the valley's west bench. The planned alignment for the Mountain View Corridor bisects the Daybreak project.

The Environment

Much of the land in and surrounding Daybreak will be protected as open and natural space. This will protect the Oquirrh Mountain's sensitive and scenic natural areas. Sensitive areas such as steep slopes, streams, and wildlife corridors will be protected by designating them as conservation areas. These conservation efforts have already begun at Daybreak where more than 30% of the project is set aside as open space for parks and natural areas.

Daybreak and the subsequent communities that will be developed on this land will consume fewer resources and produce fewer environmental impacts than more traditional projects. In Utah's high desert climate, reducing water usage is critical. Landscape designs at Daybreak utilize drought tolerant plantings to conserve water. A watershed management system also collects 100% of Daybreak's storm water and snowmelt runoff for re-use. The heart of the watershed management system is Oquirrh Lake, which will filter and hold the water for use in irrigating Daybreak's parks and open spaces. The recreation-sized lake will also function as a significant community amenity. In 2002, Envision Utah recognized Daybreak with a Governor's Award for Quality Growth for its approach to water-wise planting design and landscape maintenance.

All homes at Daybreak are independently certified under the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program. Homes built to these standards are approximately 30% more efficient than typical houses in Utah and will save their owners an average of \$300 to \$500 each year in utility costs. Energy Star homes also emit 4,500 fewer pounds of greenhouse gases annually than a typical home.

Economic development

To facilitate economic development at Daybreak, Kennecott Land has formed a venture with Sahara, Inc., a local development company focused on retail and office facilities. This venture's new company, Copper Rock Development, will leverage Kennecott Land's 93,000 acres of property with the development, designs, and building expertise of Sahara, Inc. Copper Rock's initial focus is on the nine million square feet of office, retail and industrial space approved for Daybreak.

Conclusion

Kennecott Utah Copper has been a part of the Salt Lake Valley for over 100 years. With over 93,000 acres of land situated next to a rapidly growing metropolitan area, Kennecott Land is now positioned to develop its non-mining land and water assets. Beginning with Daybreak, Kennecott Land will build many planned communities on the west bench of the Salt Lake Valley.

Figure 65
Kennecott Land Property on Salt Lake Valley's West Bench



Figure 66
A Street at Daybreak

